

EDITORIAL

Publication of research in New Zealand is fraught with a number of problems including not having a suitable journal to publish in, and the long delays involved in getting a paper published once it has been submitted. Despite this, *Mauri Ora*, an annual journal produced by the Zoology and Botany departments of the University of Canterbury, has always had difficulty attracting sufficient papers. Perhaps this can be attributed in part to its low scientific profile and the limited sources to which it appealed for manuscripts, i.e. primarily the Zoology and Botany departments of the University of Canterbury.

When our committee took over running *Mauri Ora* at the end of 1987, we decided that some modifications were necessary to improve its scientific standing, and that in doing so we could fill an empty niche in New Zealand scientific publishing. We changed the name of the journal to *New Zealand Natural Sciences* to highlight the widened scope of the journal. *New Zealand Natural Sciences* will publish research papers concerned with all aspects of the natural sciences including Botany, Geology, Microbiology, Molecular Biology, Soil Science and Zoology relevant to the New Zealand region (including Antarctica). We have established an editorial board consisting of experts in a wide range of fields to handle the more stringent refereeing of submitted manuscripts. Page format has also been altered to make papers both easier to read, and more visually appealing.

The improvements we have made should be self-evident in this issue. As we also pride ourselves on a maximum 8 month delay between submission and publication, *New Zealand Natural Sciences* is an attractive avenue for scientific publication. With the continued support of scientists with a wide range of interests, *New Zealand Natural Sciences* will continue to provide a rapid outlet for the publication of high quality research.

R.G. DEATH
Editor